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The Principles of War

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THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR

A lecture delivered
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by

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My subject this morning is 'The Principles of War,' and I'd like to begin by categorizing war as a science and as an art. Let us define science as a body of systematized knowledge, and art as skill in the application of knowledge to the accomplishment of a concrete purpose.

Now, we are at the War College to learn about war: to acquire as much as we can of the body of systematized knowledge of war, and to acquire what skills we can in the application of that knowledge. However, I should caution you that any systematized body of knowledge of war must progress some way before it can be characterized as a science. Indeed, it has been said that 'The science of war is so obscure and imperfect that its sole foundations and support are prejudice confirmed by ignorance.'

With that caution aside, how do we go about acquiring this body of knowledge, and skill in its application? It seems to me that there are several methods, but here at the War College we use two, principally. These are the study of history, and the case study method. (The rest of your year will be taken up mainly with various case studies which will increase in complexity as you progress.)

In studying history, we have to be careful of a few things. Obviously, we must be sure that the facts we study are correct--and this is not always so easy. Second, we must be wary of the prejudices of writers (no man ever made himself look bad in his memoirs, for instance). Third, we must be careful in passing judgment: it's one thing to study a battle, or campaign, in the quiet of the War College, free from pressures (particularly the pressure of time), with all, or at least most, of the facts of the situation in our possession, and it's quite another thing to make a decision in combat. Finally, we should all remember that any

man in a position to become a great failure has gotten to that position only through many successes.

The case study method was invented at the Prussian War Academy, and brought to the United States by the Naval War College. Here is a quote from the elder von Moltke which expresses a pretty sound view. It's part of his critique of a battle problem at the War Academy in the 1870's:

> If one wishes to answer such questions as are set here, one likes to look for certain rules and axioms. Such can, however, be only offered by science, and that in our case is strategy. But strategy is not of a kind like the abstract sciences. These have their invariable and precise truths upon which we can build, and from which we can draw further conclusions. The square on the hypotenuse is always equal to the sum of the squares described on the sides which contain the right angle; that remains always true be the right-angled triangle large or small, be its vertex turned to the east or west. . . .
>
> Strategy is the application of common sense to the conduct of war. The difficulty lies in its execution, for we are dependent on an infinite number of factors, like wind and weather, fogs, wrong reports, etc. If, therefore, theoretical science alone will never lead us to victory, we must nevertheless not entirely disregard it. As General von Willisen so truly says, 'It is only a step from knowing to doing, but it is a still greater step from not knowing to doing. The best lessons for the future we draw from our own experience, but as that must always be limited we must make use of the experience of others by studying history. Besides which, another means of furthering our education is the working out of such proposed warlike situations as our problems present.'

Lately there is a new vogue in studying war, and that is the application of mathematics to war. It started in World War II with operations analysis. Nowadays we hear a lot about cost effectiveness, for instance, and the application of mathematics has progressed this far:

The general formulation of a battle should embody the following concepts:

1. A battle is represented by a semi-Markov process in continuous time whose states are identified with the non-negative integers with the following possible interpretations:

2. (a) States may represent the number of hits on the enemy;

   (b) States may represent the damage level sustained by the enemy.

I have only a very hazy idea of what a Markov process is, but from the progress of events in Washington I think it is a good idea if all of us learn a little bit about that process, whatever it may be.

Now, down to the principles of war. First of all, what are principles? In the natural sciences, a principle is a statement of cause and effect, or of the relationship between cause and effect, and is true under all conditions. A principle of war, on the other hand, is something different. It is an abstract noun or phrase which epitomizes an idea. I defy you to come up with a statement of cause and effect in the single word 'mass.' Principles of war epitomize ideas but do not give precise statements of cause and effect.

Second, they are catchwords. Here we have to watch ourselves because the human tendency to use catchwords, or rules, may lull us away from thinking, from hard sequential thought, which Norman Cousins says is the most difficult effort a human can undertake. You remember such sayings as 'Red sky at night, sailors' delight.' This means a lot to some of us, but do you think any meteorologist makes his predictions by stepping out the door and looking at the color of the sky? Sometimes it does seem that they do, at least those here in Rhode Island.

A third characteristic of the principles of war is that they are assumptions, and they are rather abstract assumptions at that. They are drawn from a particular historical context, and this particular historical context is the period of modern war which Colonel Langston last week defined for you as beginning with the invention of gunpowder about 1500 A.D. Science can change most of the principles of war, and has, at least since 1945, I'd say.

Fourth, the principles of war are neither sacred nor immutable. Anyone who ever wrote a list of principles of war says that his list is 'it.' His is the final immutable list; and men have said this ever since they began writing lists of principles of war. Just from the fact that the lists have changed so much brings this viewpoint into question, as you will see when I show you some lists of principles of war, and how much they can vary.

Further, there are some dangers of using the principles of war. The first danger is that they rest on the assumption that all wars are alike both as to causes, objects, and methods, and I have only to refer you to the Renaissance, when wars were fought for different causes, had different objects, and certainly used different methods, to illustrate this point. Yet the Renaissance was in the period of modern war.

A second great danger, and this is probably the greatest danger, is that they lead to *a priori* reasoning. *A priori* reasoning deduces consequences from principles assumed as self-evident, and is derived independently of factual observation. Obviously, however, your first principle must be correct. If you start out by saying as a first principle that the earth is flat, and reason from there, you could come to a lot of wrong conclusions, and we all know that human beings have actually done just that.

There is great danger in using *a priori* reasoning in war, and this danger is illustrated by the French after the Franco-Prussian War. As you all know, in that war they were defeated very badly by the Prussians. After the war, French army officers sat down to study and find out why they were defeated. They studied history: they studied Napoleon and they studied the Prussians. They studied Napoleon because just sixty years before he had been the conqueror of all Europe, with the very same French nation, same Frenchmen, etc., and they studied the Prussians for the reason that the Prussians had beaten them. Now the one thing they came up with in common between the Prussians and Napoleon was the spirit of the offensive. Both Napoleon and the Prussians had been on the offensive most of the time; therefore, the French officers deduced that the spirit of the offensive is the key to victory, and from that they built their whole doctrine. They even went so far as to bring into account their French racial characteristics. 'Nothing can stop a Frenchman with a bayonet,' was one of their sayings. 'A Frenchman on the offensive is good, a Frenchman on the defensive is poor, therefore the Frenchman should always be on the offensive,' was another.

There were some dissenters to this doctrine, though. Pétain, who was then a colonel, was one. Pétain said that their doctrine was dangerous, that you couldn't look at just one principle and build a whole doctrine from it. Pétain said, instead, 'Let's study the situation. What are the conditions? What is the terrain? What are the relative strengths? What are the many other considerations?' And he said, 'What about the effects of firepower?' Pétain had been studying the growing technological impact of modern science, and he realized that firepower had been overlooked in the French infantry. He came up with a saying: 'Firepower kills.' Well, the Young Turks on the French General Staff had to come up with a counter to that, and went all the way back to a Russian general in the 17th century who had said, 'Bullets don't think. Only the bayonet has intelligence.' From that they apparently deduced that French spirit made them bulletproof. Anyway, their doctrine was to attack; as soon as you see the enemy, attack. The outcome of this doctrine was the so-called Battle of the Frontiers. In the first two weeks of World War I, the French lost 300,000 men to those unthinking German bullets, and all because they didn't study the situation. They attacked down defiles in the Ardennes Forest. They attacked whenever they saw the Germans, and the Germans shot them. Three hundred thousand casualties, by the way, was a greater loss in a two-week period than was sustained in any other two weeks of the war, just for comparison, and this includes the battles of Verdun and the Somme.

Another danger of using these principles of war is that they tend to lead to oversimplification. This is because they are catchwords. It is easy to oversimplify. It's easy to say, 'I've got mass, I've got security, I shall therefore win,' without seriously considering the situation. Without really knowing what the situation is you may think you have these things, but you haven't thought it out—so beware of oversimplification.

Another danger is that war cannot be fought mechanically by a book of rules. Here is a quote about the enemies of a great general:

> Napoleon's opponents moved their men on the chessboard according to the rules which they took for immutable principles, and the game went on so long as their antagonists were also guided by them; but when an adversary appeared who only awaited the development of their methodical movements to play his own secret, profound and decisive game, all equality of chances disappeared and the only variety in the result was the mode of defeat.

The key word here is—and we have all noticed it—'immutable.' I don't believe that a principle of war can be said to be immutable. Immutability leads to inflexibility. Here is a quote from Admiral C. R. Brown: 'Adherence to one principle frequently demands violation of another. Any leader who adheres inflexibly to one set of commandments is inviting disastrous defeat from a resourceful opponent.'

Now there is yet another danger. This is that the principles of war can lead to a blindness to the real situation. They tend to lead people into preconceived ideas about what the situation is, by blindly following the principles of war, rather than into considering what the situation actually is; and this has happened frequently.

However, there are some values to principles of war. (I don't want you to think that they are all wrong.) The first value is that they help to get us thinking about war. If we think about the principles of war—not merely repeat them or memorize them—but *think* about them, this is good; we are thinking about war. If we are continually testing them, seeing if they do apply, testing to see whether or not a principle applies in an historical situation, then we are thinking about war - and we are thinking about the situation. Here is what Mahan had to say about the values of the principles of war.

> Formulated principles, however excellent, are by themselves too abstract to sustain convinced allegiance; the reasons for them, as manifested in concrete cases, are an imperative part of the process through which they really enter the mind and possess the will.

This is the value of them; if we are thinking about them, then we are thinking about war, and this is what we are here at the War College to do. This is the problem of the principles of war: they are not principles of natural science; they are abstract nouns and phrases, and they must be thought about.

The principles of war have one other value. They may help to keep us on the right track, perhaps. They at least help to keep us from getting off the track. Here is another quote from Mahan: 'War acknowledges principles, and even rules, but these are not so much fetters, or bars, which compel its movement aright, as guides which warn us when it is going wrong.'

Now let us look at some lists of principles of war. The first one is Sun Tzu's. Sun Tzu wrote a book about war at some time around 500 B.C. All our modern books about Sun Tzu say that he had thirteen principles of war. Well, I searched through his book *The Art of War* and I conldn't find thirteen. I did come to the table of contents eventually, and found that there were thirteen chapters. Now the title of one of these chapters is 'Laying Plans.' Laying plans is not a principle of war. It is a means of planning or a means of applying knowledge to war, but it certainly isn't a principle of war. 'Classification of Terrain,' 'The Army on the March' and 'The Use of Spies' are some of the other chapter titles, and I doubt if any one of those can be called a principle of war. He did, however, formulate five essentials for victory. Here are his five essentials; I think his fifth essential is applicable today.

Sun Tzu's Five Essentials for Victory

1. He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.

2. He will win who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces.

3. He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all ranks.

4. He will win who, prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared.

5. He will win who has military capacity and is not interfered with by the sovereign.

Next we come to Clausewitz. As Colonel Langston pointed out last week, Clausewitz wrote his book *The Principles of War* in 1810, just before he left the Prussians and went to join the Russians; he wrote this book for the Crown Prince of Prussia. This book, incidentally, was written before Clausewitz became a serious student of military history.

Many writers credit Clausewitz with seven principles, but once again I had to go to the table of contents, and found that he had seven subheadings there. He actually had four or five principles of war. I should say that what Colonel Langston calls a principle is actually a corollary; I'd say that 'Surprise through swiftness' is the corollary to 'Never waste time.' But really it

doesn't make any difference whether it says four or five; the point is that he didn't have seven. You can look through this list and when you see later lists you will see quite a bit of correlation between Clausewitz and others.

Clausewitz's Four Rules

1. Use our entire forces with the utmost energy.

2. Concentrate our power as much as possible against that section where the chief blows are to be delivered and incur disadvantages elsewhere.

3. Never waste time.

   a. Surprise through swiftness.

4. Follow up our successes with the utmost energy.

Now at this point I would like to digress a little bit. In Colonel Langston's lecture you were told that Clausewitz said that war was an extension of politics by other means. This may well be true, but I would like to point out that Sir Walter Raleigh said that war is the failure of politics. This leads to different conceptions, and what I am talking about right here is the so-called 'soft underbelly of Europe.' I think Colonel Langston told you, but just to refresh you, 'the soft underbelly of Europe,' where Churchill wanted to invade in World War II, was actually Italy and the Balkans. Churchill wanted to get into the Balkans to insure political control after the war. However, it is one thing to call the area 'the soft underbelly of Europe' and it is another thing to look at the map and see what this soft underbelly actually is—to study the situation. This is what Samuel Eliot Morison says about the soft underbelly: 'It was boned with the Apennines, plated with the hard scales of Kesselring's armor, and sheltered by the wings of the Luftwaffe.' This is something to think about. A lot of people found that the soft underbelly of Europe was hard to push into. You know how long it took the Army to go up the boot of Italy. It would have been even more difficult to go into Yugoslavia through the Ljubljana Gap out of Trieste, and here is a footnote, if you are interested about politics: Tito had orders from Stalin that if the Allies invaded Yugoslavia he was to side with the Germans. Now think of the soft underbelly in political terms.

Napoleon had 116 maxims, but the books tell us there were 115. I'll cover the 116th in the question period, if you are interested.

I'll skip over Foch, and come to the British Army principles of war. They were first put down by J.F.C. Fuller in 1912. They were printed in the *Royal United Service Institution Journal* in 1916, and were put into the British Army Field Service Regulations in 1920. They also formed the basis for the U.S. Army's list of principles of war. Here is the list of the British Army's principles of war:

British Army Principles of War

Selection and Maintenance of Aims
Offensive Action
Administration (Note: Logistics, in U.S. usage)
Co-operation
Concentration of Forces
Economy of Effort
Flexibility
Surprise
Security
Maintenance of Morale

Next come the U.S. Army principles. There are nine of them. If you rearrange this list, you can form an acronym for remembering the Army principles of war, and this acronym is MOSSCOMES. If you want to remember principles of war, this is a good way perhaps, but I am not so sure that you should memorize lists of principles.

U.S. Army Principles of War

Objective
Offensive
Mass
Economy of Force
Maneuver
Unity of Command
Security
Surprise
Simplicity

Next we have the U.S. Air Force principles of war. The Air Force takes a little bit different stand. General Muir S. Fairchild, who was first Commanding General of the Air University, refused to allow blind acceptance of any principles of war. He later became Vice Chief of the Air Staff, and in this position still maintained that we can't have principles as official doctrines which would be followed blindly. He desired no blind acceptance; he insisted that each principle has to be restudied constantly in terms of the situation.

U.S. Air Force Principles of War

Objective
Offensive
Co-operation
Concentration
Economy
Surprise
Security
Mobility
Simplicity

The U.S. Navy didn't have a list of principles of war until fairly recently. In fact, as recently as 1953, there was no official doctrine, nor official publication which promulgated a list of U.S. Navy principles of war. In 1953, apparently under the pressure of unification, Admiral R.L. Conolly, who was President of the Naval War College, wrote a list of principles which he published in the Naval Institute *Proceedings*. In his article he said that, under unification, it seemed as if we were going to have to have a list of principles of war, and submitted a suggested list. Now, there are quite a few reasons why Navies have never accepted lists of principles of war. For instance, here is a quote from a British General, written a few months after Gallipoli (in which the British tried to get around the stalemate on the Western Front by applying sea power and going to the flanks): 'Sea power and command of the sea are colossal assets, yet sea power is also a great seducer from the principles of war.'

The Army and Navy approach the principles of war differently. This is what the Army says about the principles of war:

> The principles of war are fundamental truths governing the prosecution of war. Their proper application is essential to the exercise of command and to successful conduct of

military operations. These principles are interrelated and, dependent on the circumstances, may tend to reinforce one another or to be in conflict. Consequently, the degree of application of any specific principle will vary with the situation.

This is what the Navy says:

Principles of war were first formulated in an era when the movements of forces and logistic support were operations much more simple than they are in the 20th century. They were intended originally as a guide to the conduct of land warfare. The principles described briefly in this appendix (to NWP 10) do not agree with any standard lists either in number or titles. Rather, they represent observations relating to principles of war which appear to be applicable in some degree to naval warfare. They are not listed in any particular order, since relative importance will vary in accordance to the nature of a given situation. These principles, which are somewhat interdependent, are suggested as general guides useful for study rather than as immutable doctrine or as infallible laws guaranteed to produce definite results. Since war is not a precise science there is no standard formula for translating any set of principles into action. Interpretation and adaptation must necessarily be made against the background of past successes or failures in war and in the light of the evolutionary nature of technology, naval doctrine, and national policy.

Here is the list of U.S. Navy principles of war:

U.S. Navy Principles of War

Objective
Morale
Simplicity
Control
Offensive
Exploitation
Mobility
Concentration
Economy
Surprise
Security
Readiness

Just for comparison, let us take a look at the Russian principles of war. Here they are:

Russian Principles of War

Advance and Consolidation
Offensive
Combined Arms
Concentration
Economy of Force
Maneuver and Initiative
Surprise and Deception
Adequate Reserves
Morale
Annihilation

Let us now take a look at the U.S. Navy's principles of war individually. The first principle is the 'objective.' The objective is the end toward which action is being directed. It is generally called the first, or most important—and some people say it is the only—principle of war. Obviously we have to make sure our objective is clearly defined; otherwise we may get off into a sideshow. There is a difference between an abstract objective and a physical objective which will be explained later in this study. This is what Admiral Brown says about the objective:

> The objective . . . is unquestionably the most important of all the principles of war. It is the connecting link which, alone, can impart coherence to war. . . . Without the objective, all other principles are pointless. It gives the commander the 'what.' The other principles are guides in the 'how.'

The thing we must do is to keep our objective in mind. We don't want to take action without an objective. Marshal Saxe, the great French marshal of the early 18th century, had this to say: 'One must not fight for the sake of fighting. Battles concerning which one cannot say why and to what purpose they have been delivered are commonly the resource of ignorant men.'

Now let's take a look at an historical example of the objective. In June 1944 the Fifth Fleet under Admiral Spruance made an amphibious assault on Saipan. Under Admiral Spruance was Task Force 58 (the fast carriers) and the Joint Expeditionary Task Force, which comprised the Army, Marines and amphibious shipping

which actually assaulted Saipan. On June 16, 1944 Admiral Spruance received word that the Japanese Second Fleet had deployed from Tawitawi. That was the only information of the Japanese that he had. On June 17 he conferred with his subordinates, Admiral Turner and Admiral Mitscher, and told them that it looked like action was imminent, but to remember that the objective was the seizure of Saipan. On the night of June 18th Task Force 58 steamed east toward Saipan, rather than west or southwest toward the enemy, because (1) They didn't know exactly where the enemy was, but (2) their objective was the seizure of Saipan, not the destruction of Japanese carriers. Remember that Admiral Spruance's objective was the seizure of Saipan, not the destruction of Japanese carriers. This has been an item of controversy ever since. I won't go into it any further except to say that in the battle which ensued, Japanese carrier air strength was drastically reduced, despite the fact that Task Force 58 did not seek out the Japanese carriers.

Here is an example of misuse of principles. I refer to that Academy Award winner, Lawrence of Arabia. The railroad which snpplied the Turks in Arabia during World War I went down as far as Medina. The British Army under Allenby was fighting along through Palestine toward Jerusalem a very long distance from Medina. Lawrence was wrecking railroads way down in the south toward Medina, where it didn't do a bit of good in helping Allenby's army. In fact, there was only one Turkish battalion in Medina, and Lawrence didn't manage even to interrupt their supply by railroad. The railroad wasn't really cut until 1918, by a man named Dawnay, and he cut it so well that the railroad is not in use today. The point is that the war was going on in Palestine and Lawrence was trying to wreck a railroad supplying one Turkish battalion in Arabia.

Let's take another look at Lawrence trying to accomplish his objective. In the late Fall of 1917 the British Army was approaching Jerusalem. The supplies for the Turks in Jerusalem came down on a railroad to Deraa, thence to the Yarmuk Valley, where the railroad crossed a couple of bridges, and then on to Jerusalem. Allenby told Lawrence to blow the bridges in the Yarmuk Valley between November 5th and November 7th, 1917. Lawrence went up there, but it rained; he sat in his tent, and then eventually went back to Arabia. This is an example of failure to accomplish the objective. Incidentally, it was suggested to me there that perhaps Lawrence invented a new principle of war, the principle of publicity, because Lawrence was given all the credit for this campaign, although he was only one of many.

The next principle we will take up is the principle of 'morale.' We all have our own idea of what morale is. I'll give you the definition out of NWP 10(A) - 'Morale is the general spirit, or state of mind of an individual, or group of individuals, as reflected in behavior under various conditions.' The best example I know of, dealing with morale, is the German High Seas Fleet in the Fall of 1918. It was a fleet which was mechanically and materially superior to the fleet which had fought the British in the Battle of Jutland in 1916. Yet in the Fall of 1918, its morale was so bad that it mutinied. The revolt spread through Northern Germany, and the Germans had to leave the war because of it. Of course, there were many other reasons for their leaving the war, but the immediate cause was this revolt in Northern Germany. The German Army never mutinied, but the German Navy did. That is an example of bad morale.

Another example of morale affecting a situation is the French Army in the Spring of 1917, after the disastrous Nivelle offensive in which there were very high losses—a result of overemphasis on the spirit of the offensive; human grapeshot had failed again. The French Army mutinied. There were only two reliable divisions between the Germans and Paris; 138 divisions were more or less in a state of mutiny. Had the Germans attacked, they could have taken Paris. On the other hand, I am not so sure that Washington's men, after a bad winter in Valley Forge, had really high morale when they crossed the Delaware.

The next principle is 'simplicity.' Simplicity is clarity. We need simplicity in plans, strategy, weapons and command; one man should serve one master. The nature of simplicity is relative, however; what is simple for a well-trained force may be very complex for a poorly trained force. We should avoid oversimplification at the expense of accuracy, completeness and flexibility; there is such a thing as being too simple.

This is what the biographer of Stonewall Jackson had to say:

> Stonewall Jackson's orders for battle were in every essential respect a model. They were very short, not to say abrupt; but they were exceedingly clear. They left no doubt whatever as to the intentions of the General and Chief. They entered into no details except where details were absolutely necessary.

Here is the plan which Spruance issued to Mitscher before the Battle of the Philippine Sea of June 19, 1944:

> Our air will first knock out enemy carriers, then will attack enemy battleships and cruisers to slow or disable them. Battle line will destroy enemy fleet either by fleet action if the enemy elects to fight, or by sinking slow or crippled ships, if enemy retreats. Action against the enemy must be pushed vigorously by all hands to ensure complete destruction of his fleet. Destroyers running short of fuel may be returned to Saipan if necessary for refueling.
>
> Desire you proceed at your discretion selecting dispositions and movements best calculated to meet the enemy under most advantageous conditions. I shall issue general directives when necessary and leave details to you and Admiral Lee.

Then he cautioned them:

> Task Force 58 must cover Saipan.

(He was thinking of his objective—the seizure of Saipan.) This plan was a model of simplicity.

The fourth principle is that of 'control.' In the U.S. Navy, control, which replaces the 'co-operation,' 'co-ordination,' and 'command' found in other lists of principles of war, is composed of four elements: command and organization in which the chain of command responsibility is thoroughly defined; efficient communications to serve command; training and indoctrination; and professionally competent leadership. A good example of violation of this principle is the ABDA Command in Southeast Asia at the start of World War II; it was formed on the 15th of January 1942. ABDA stands for American, British, Dutch, Australian; it was a combined command formed in a hurry. There never was any clear chain of command; there never was a common agreement on strategy. The British wanted to defend Singapore, the Dutch wanted to defend Java, the Australians wanted to defend Australia and the Americans wanted to fall back and gain time to make a comeback. There wasn't any complete agreement on many things. The ABDA naval forces never had a common signal book, nor had they a common language, and their operations were thus hampered tremendously. They never had time for training and indoctrination. Their whole war was over within a month or two.

One can't say that the Allies lost that battle because of errors in applying the principle of control. They probably would have lost this campaign anyway; they were unprepared. But it is an example of the violation of the principle of control.

The next principle is the principle of the 'offensive.' The offensive is the act of seeking to obtain control not previously held. Navy doctrine states that victory can never be won by passive defense. Only sustained offensive action brings success. Examples of the offensive, are, of course, the Pacific campaigns in World War II, the bomber offensive against Germany in World War II, and the landings in Normandy. (Hitler was defeated by an offensive ground battle in Northern Europe.)

Now, there is a question here. Will this principle of the offensive still apply across the board in limited wars? Will any of these principles apply across the board in limited war? Think a little bit about the offensive. How far can you go on the offensive without getting into danger of escalation into general war? An example of this is Korea: after the truce talks started, neither side really went on the offensive.

The sixth principle is 'exploitation.' Exploitation is following up success. It is closely allied to the principle of the offensive and to the principle of surprise, and it is closely associated with momentum, also. Plans and operations must be flexible enough to take advantage of local successes or situations, or to follow up. An example of the failure to follow this principle was the failure of Union General Meade after Gettysburg. He defeated Lee at Gettysburg, but he didn't follow up. Some modern historians say that he never had a chance to follow up, but the point is that he never seriously tried; he left Gettysburg much too late to chase Lee. A good example of the successful use of exploitation occurred in September 1944: Admiral Halsey's recommendation to the Joint Chiefs of Staff to move into the Philippines in advance of schedule. In his carrier strikes against the Philippines, he had found that the Japanese air was very weak there. He immediately recommended moving forward the timetable, to take Leyte two months ahead of schedule, and bypassing Yap. The Joint Chiefs concurred, and Leyte was assaulted two months ahead of schedule. The result was that we made greater gains than had we marched step by step, island by island—a Japanese weakness was exploited.

'Mobility' is the next principle. Mobility implies rapidity plus flexibility plus endurance. Don't confuse mobility with speed,

because mobility has also the element of endurance. Endurance is achieved through logistic support. For the Navy, mobility replaces 'maneuver,' which is essentially a tactical term, and 'movement,' which is essentially a strategic term, and includes endurance.

An example of mobility is Halsey's Task Force 38 operations from the 1st of July to the 15th of August 1945. He struck targets from the Inland Sea to Hokkaido several times, and moved about constantly, operating for 45 days. He could have stayed for 90 days, or even longer, because he had endurance. Indeed, our whole offensive across the Pacific during the war was a demonstration of mobility.

The eighth principle is 'concentration.' Concentration implies superior force at the decisive point at the proper time. (Incidentally, you'll notice the word 'implies'; we can't say 'equals,' because these aren't principles of natural science, and we can't say that there is any mathematical proportion to be found in these principles.) Concentration is used in the Navy, instead of 'mass' or 'superiority,' because of its connotation of decisiveness in time and space. Here is an example of concentration: In January and February of 1944 the Pacific Fleet went into the Marshall Islands. The decisive point in the Marshall Islands was Kwajalein. It was decisive because (1) it had the strongest defensive force; (2) it was the logistics distribution point for all of the Japanese forces on the outlying islands; (3) it is geographically right in the heart of all of the Marshalls and (4) it was decisive in time because the Japanese were just about to complete a 6,000-foot bomber strip there. Admiral Nimitz realized that if he were going to take the Marshalls he had to take Kwajalein. He believed that the fast carriers, in conjunction with land-based bombers from Tarawa, could hold down the Japanese air enough so that he could get in and seize the atoll. Admiral Spruance, Admiral Turner and General H.M. Smith thought that his plan was much too bold. They wanted to go into Majuro, and then work into Kwajalein. Nimitz, however, was convinced that he could achieve concentration with the carrier task force and land-based bombers, and that this concentration applied at the decisive point (Kwajalein) would enable him to seize the Marshalls. And that is what happened; the Japanese air was beaten down and Kwajalein was seized. The result was that the Japanese outer defensive line was smashed and the Japanese were put back onto their inner defensive line, which ran from Samoa to New Guinea and thence to the Marianas. From then on, the Japanese were on the downgrade, and were pushed steadily back for the rest of the war.

'Economy' is the next principle. Economy implies an economical use of forces and a judicious expenditure of resources in order to achieve maximum efforts. What that means is that we can't be strong everywhere. We must be strong in some places, but we can't be strong in all places. An example of the use of economy is the withdrawal of units of our combat fleet from the South Pacific in the Spring of 1944. There wasn't any real combat going on down there, and the Japanese did not have enough forces to accomplish any worthwhile objectives, so combat forces were withdrawn from the South Pacific and sent to the Central Pacific. Because of this accretion to the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Nimitz was able to form the Third and the Fifth Fleets. An example of violation of the principle of economy, however, was maintaining the bases for these combat forces in the South Pacific once they had been withdrawn. Maintaining bases is an expensive proposition.

The tenth principle is 'surprise.' Surprise is confrontation of the enemy with force he is not prepared to meet. Clausewitz was enamored of surprise, and, of course, many battles have been won through its use. But surprise can be intoxicating; one may get so wrapped up in the contemplation of what his surprise will do to the enemy that he will be surprised in the meantime. We must always keep thinking, for 'ignorance and stupidity are the dam and sire of surprise.'

Surprise can be achieved through originality, audacity, speed, secrecy, concealment, or deception—and don't forget that the principle of exploitation is closely allied to the principle of surprise—be prepared to follow up. The British Army in the Autumn of 1917 achieved surprise, in the mass use of tanks for the first time at Cambrai, but they weren't prepared to follow up. The tanks made a tremendous penetration into the German lines, but because the British weren't prepared for success, they didn't follow up with enough infantry, and the result was that they lost their tanks and what little infantry they had, and got pushed back two miles in the bargain. Another illustration of surprise is Midway, where the *Yorktown* and *Enterprise* appeared suddenly when the Japanese believed them to be far to the south of Pearl Harbor. And still another example is the Battle of the Falkland Islands in December of 1914, when two British battle cruisers—which had arrived only twelve hours previously—surprised von Spee's squadron. Von Spee was attempting to seize the Falklands, but lost his cruiser squadron because he was surprised.

Now for an illustration of the danger of following any one principle too closely: in this case the principle is surprise, and the occasion is the Salerno Bay landing. The Army wanted surprise, and a predawn assault landing was planned, with no naval gunfire preparation. Unfortunately, a German division was there with a battalion on the beach, and tremendous infantry losses were incurred in that landing; the German battalion could have been destroyed by naval gunfire preparation, which had been omitted through a desire for surprise.

The next principle is 'security.' Security implies anticipating and minimizing unproductive loss resulting from enemy action. Security gives us freedom of action, but we can't be secure everywhere. We have to use forces economically, and it is well to remember that sometimes security can be achieved better by offensive measures than by defensive measures.

Napoleon had this to say about security:

> A great captain ought to say to himself several times a day, 'If the enemy appears in front, on my right, or on my left, how shall I act?' If he finds himself in want of answers he is ill-prepared.

General Sheridan remarked on the distinction between Grant and the previous commanders of the Army of the Potomac:

> The difference between previous commanders of the Army of the Potomac and Grant was that *they* were always worrying about what the enemy could do to them, whereas Grant wondered what he could do to the enemy.

An example of the principle of security, from World War II, was the dilemma of the Commander, North Pacific Force in the Summer of 1942. The Japanese had established themselves on Attu and Kiska, but this admiral was convinced that the Japanese were going to seize Dutch Harbor, regardless of the fact that they didn't have the forces to do it, and regardless of the fact that Midway had pretty well defeated the Japanese for the time being. As a result of this conviction, he tied himself to Dutch Harbor, and didn't do what Admiral King several times told him to do. The final result was that this admiral spent the rest of the war in Boston.

The last principle is 'readiness.' There are five types of readiness—command readiness, intelligence readiness, personnel readiness, plans readiness and logistics readiness. Command readiness requires an adequate organization and trained staff and leaders. Intelligence readiness implies an intelligence structure in being, organized and functioning before hostilities commence and maintained afterward. Personnel readiness comprises, in part, training programs and personnel replacement plans. Plans readiness implies the availability of plans for anticipated operations. Finally, logistics readiness means that we have logistics support ready, we know how we are going to employ it, and we have tested our plans for logistics feasibility.

Now, what have I told you in this lecture? I hope I got these points across: first, that the principles of war are not a substitute for logical analysis, common sense, broad professional judgment, and good leadership; second, that you can't fight wars by a book of rules, and that reliance on the principles, or on just one of them, can get you into trouble. Both Napoleon and Hitler observed every one of the principles of war in their invasions of Russia. A British general said, referring to the principles of war:

> By themselves they will not help a soldier to solve a problem of war any more than a knowledge of the principles of painting will, without steady practice and natural aptitude, enable an artist to paint a picture.

Every critic knows the principles of painting, but very few of them can paint. There is no substitute for facing each situation and dealing with it as it actually is, rather than as you would like to see it in terms of the principles of war. Finally, if there is a real principle of war, it is the principle of the objective. The objective means more than all the rest.

I thought that you might be interested in some further reading on the principles of war:

Suggested Further Reading.

Sound Military Decision.

Brown, Charles R. 'The Principles of War.' *United States Naval Institute Proceedings,* June 1949, p. 621-633.

Conolly, Richard L. 'The Principles of War.' *United States Naval Institute Proceedings,* January 1953, p. 1-9.

Gaulle, Charles de. *The Edge of the Sword.* New York: Criterion, 1960.

Keegan, John D. 'On the Principles of War.' *Military Review,* December 1961, p. 61-72.

U.S. Department of the Air Force. *U.S. Air Force Basic Doctrine.* AFM 1-2. Washington: 1 December 1959.

U.S. Department of the Army. *Field Service Regulations, Operations.* FM 100-5. Washington: February 1962.

U.S. Department of the Navy. Office of Naval Operations. *Naval Warfare.* NWP 10(A). Washington: 1 November 1961.

If there is anything I can leave with you, it is this: 'Rules can aid the wise, but they are snares to the fool.'

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

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Purdue University, 1943-1944
USNA, 1950, B.S.
Naval War College, Command and Staff Course, 1962

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NavWarCol	Staff	6/62-
NavWarCol	Student	7/61-6/62
USS Barry (DD-933)	XO	9/59-7/61
BuPers	Lt Detail	9/57-7/59
USS Redpoll (MSC(O)-57)	CO	7/55-8/57
USS Keppler (DDE-765)	Ops	7/53-7/55
VS Sq	Air Frames	6/52-6/53
Flight Training	Student	10/50-5/52
USNA	Midshipman	8/46-6/50
LST-658	QM 3/c	9/45-6/46
Various training stations	Enlisted	9/44-9/45